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THE LIFE OF
FRA ANGELICO



1849—50



THE LIFE OF
GIOVANNI ANGELICO DA FIESOLE.

Vasari, Giorgio

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The Life of
GIOVANNI ANGELICO
DA FIESOLE,

Translated from the Italian of Vasari

BY

GIOVANNI AUBREY BEZZI,

With Notes and Illustrations.



PRINTED FOR THE ARUNDEL SOCIETY.

1850.



Fra Giovanni da Fiesole.



RATE* GIOVANNI ANGELICO Da Fiesole, whose secular name was Guido, (1) having been not less excellent as a Painter and Illuminator, than as an Ecclesiastic, on both accounts well deserves that his life should be honourably recorded. He might have lived an easy life in the world, and, in addition to what he had, might have gained whatever he wished by the exercise of

* Fra or Frate, that is, Brother.

that Art, in which he excelled from his very youth ; nevertheless, being good and gentle by nature, he determined for his own satisfaction and peace of mind, and in order to attend above all things to the saving of his soul, to enter the religious Order of the Dominicans.(2) For although it is possible to serve God in all conditions of life, still there are some to whom their own salvation appears more secure in monasteries than in the world ; which indeed as it succeeds fortunately for the good, so, on the contrary, is the result truly miserable and sad to him who makes himself an Ecclesiastic for other ends.

There are by the hand of Fra Giovanni in his Convent of St. Mark at Florence, illuminated choir-books inexpressibly beautiful, and of a like perfection are those which he executed with incredible diligence, and left in S. Domenico at Fiesole.(3) It must be said, however, that in these he was helped by an elder brother of his,(4) who was also an Illuminator, as well as sufficiently practised in the art of Painting. One of the earliest works of this good Father is that which he painted on panel in the Certosa of Florence ; and which is there placed in the principal Chapel of the Cardinal Acciaiuoli ; it represents our Lady, with the infant Jesus in her arms ; at their feet are some very beautiful angels singing and playing upon instruments of music, and at their sides St. Lawrence, St. Mary Magdalene, St. Zanobius, and St. Benedict. The Predella contains illustrations of the lives of these saints in small figures done with the utmost care. In the Transept of that same Chapel are two other paintings on panel by the same hand, one representing the Coronation of our Lady, with

two Saints, painted with the most beautiful ultramarines. (5) He afterwards painted in fresco on the screen* of S. Maria Novella, next to the door facing the Choir, St. Dominic, St. Catharine of Sienna, and St. Peter the Martyr, and some small subjects in the Chapel of the Coronation of our Lady. (6) On the doors of the old organ he painted on cloth an Annunciation, which is now in the Convent, opposite to the entrance of the lower dormitory, between the two cloisters. This good Father was for his deserts so beloved by Cosimo de Medici, that having built a wall around the Church and the Convent of St. Mark, Cosimo took care to have the whole Passion of Jesus Christ [*see Pl. I*] painted by Giovanni on one of the walls of the Chapter house, (7) with all the Saints on one side, who had been heads or founders of any religious Order, sorrowing and weeping at the foot of the Cross, and on the other the Evangelist St. Mark attending upon the Mother of the Son of God, who has fainted at the spectacle of the Saviour of the world crucified; ministering unto and supporting her are the other Marys, all sorrowful, and together with them Sts. Cosimo and Damiano. It is said that the head of St. Cosimo is the portrait, taken from life, of his friend the Sculptor Nanni d'Antonio di Banco. Under this work he painted, upon the frieze over the dado, a Tree with St.

* "Screen" is an imperfect translation of the word "tramezzo," which indicates a structure attached to the sides of the High Altar, for the use of the Choral performers. These Altar-Screens, which have now disappeared, were to be seen in several Churches of Florence, such as S^a. Maria Nuova, S^a. Maria Novella, S^a. Croce, S. Marco and others. Vasari, in his own Life, says that Cosimo I. commissioned him to remove the Altar-Screen of S^a. Maria Novella, and that the Church was very much improved by the removal.

Dominic at the root of it, and, within round shields about the branches, all the Popes, Cardinals, Bishops, Saints, and theological teachers, who had belonged to his Order,—that of the Dominicans,—down to his own time. In this work, and with the assistance of the Brethren, who collected information from different places, he was enabled to paint several portraits. They were these: St. Dominic in the middle, who holds the trunk of the tree; Pope Innocent V, a Frenchman; the Beato Ugoni, first Cardinal of that order; the Beato Paolo of Florence; the Patriarch, St. Antonino, (8) Archbishop of Florence; Giordano Tedesco, second General of that order; of Beato Niccolò; and the Beato Remigio, and Boninsegno the Martyr, both Florentines; all these are on the right side. On the left he placed Benedict XI. of Treviso; Giandomenico, a Florentine Cardinal; Pietro, da Palude, Patriarch of Jerusalem; Albertus Magnus, the German; Raimondo the Catalan, third General of the Order; the Beato Chiaro of Florence, Father Provincial at Rome; St. Vincent of Valence, and the Beato Bernardo of Florence; all these heads are full of grace and beauty. (9) Within some lunettes under the outer cloister he painted also many beautiful figures in fresco, and a Saviour on the Cross with St. Dominic at the foot of it, which is very much praised, (10) and, besides many other things about the cells [*see Pl. 2*] and on the walls, he painted in the dormitory a subject from the New Testament beautiful beyond all praise. (11) But most wonderful of all is the principal altar-piece [*see Pl. 3*] on panel in the same Church, for the Virgin in it by her sweet simplicity inspires devotion in the hearts of all beholders, and the Saints who

surround her breathe a like influence. (12) In the Predella are represented some subjects from the martyrdom of Sts. Cosimo and Damiano, and of others, so beautifully, that it is impossible to conceive small figures more delicate, or better conceived, or more carefully finished. (13) He executed likewise the principal altar-piece of S. Domenico at Fiesole, which, having probably shown signs of decay, has been retouched by other painters, and somewhat injured, but the Predella, and the Ciborium of the Holy Sacrament are better preserved, and an infinite number of small figures, seen in the celestial glory, are so beautiful that they really appear to belong to Heaven, and no one is ever fated with beholding them. (14) In a chapel of the same Church there is also a panel painted by him, representing the Annunciation, in which the Angel Gabriel's (15) profile is so devout, delicate, and well drawn, that it looks not like the work of a mortal hand, but as if it had been painted in Paradise. In the landscape in the background are seen Adam and Eve, who were the cause of the Incarnation of our Redeemer through the Virgin. The Predella contains also some beautiful small subjects; but of all his works, that in which Fra Giovanni surpassed himself, and manifested his greatest powers and knowledge of his Art, is a picture in that same Church, at the left of the door of entrance, representing Christ crowning the Virgin-mother [*see Pl. 4*] in the midst of a choir of Angels, and surrounded by hosts of Saints, both men and women, (16) so innumerable, and still so well brought out in their various attitudes and in their individual expression, that an indescribable pleasure and sweetness is felt in con-

templating them, and it seems, that the blessed Spirits cannot be in Heaven otherwise than they are here represented, or rather, to speak more correctly, that they could not be different, if they were there in the body; for not only the Saints are living, and have a delicate and sweet expression of countenance, but the entire colouring of the picture appears to be the handiwork of a Saint or Angel, which indeed it is; hence most rightly was this good Monk ever called Frate Giovanni Angelico. The subjects of the Virgin and St. Dominic, which he painted on the Predella, are divine in their kind, and I for my part can assert in all truth, that I never look upon that work without discovering new beauties, and never leave it without regret. In the Chapel of the Annunziata at Florence, built by Piero, son of Cosimo de Medici, he painted on the doors of the ambry, in which stand the silver vessels, some small figures worked out most carefully [*see Pl. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11*]. (17) This Father painted so many pictures, which are dispersed through the houses of the Florentines, that sometimes I am lost in wonder when I think how works so good and so many could, though in the course of many years, have been brought to perfection by one man alone. The Very Reverend Don Vincenzio Borghini, Superintendent of the Hospital of the Innocents, has a most beautiful little picture representing the Virgin: and Bartolomeo Gondi, as great a lover of the Arts as any gentleman can be, possesses a large picture, a small one, and a Crucifixion, all by his hand. The pictures on the arch above the gate of San Domenico are his also, as well as the Deposition from the Cross, painted on wood for the Sacristy of Santa Trinità, [*see Pl. 12*] (18) upon which he bestowed so much care,

that it may be reckoned one of his completest works. In San Francesco, beyond the Porta a San Miniato, there is an Annunciation, and in S. Maria Novella, besides the works already mentioned, he painted small subjects on the Pascal candle, and on the Reliquaries, [*see Pl. 18*] which are exposed upon the Altar on the great solemnities of the Church. In the Abbey of the same City, over the door of the cloister, he painted a St. Benedict in the act of enjoining silence. (19) For the Flax-merchant's Guild he painted a picture, [*see Pl. 13*](20) which is in their Guild-hall, and at Cortona a little lunette over the door of the church (21) of his own Order, as well as the principal Altar-piece; these are on panel. In the Duomo of Orvieto he began some Prophets [*see Pl. 14 and 15*] (which were afterwards completed by Luca da Cortona), on the ceiling of the Chapel dedicated to the Virgin. For the Confraternity of the Tempio of Florence, he painted a Dead Christ on panel, (22) and, in the Church of the Friars of the Angeli, a Paradise and a Hell in small figures,* [*see Pl. 16*] in which with great propriety he represented the Blessed in glorified beauty, and full of joy and heavenly delight, and the Damned made ready for the pains of Hell, in all the various shapes of sorrow, and bearing stamped upon their faces their sins and their shame. The Blessed are seen in celestial dance, entering the gates of Paradise, and the wicked dragged down by Devils into the eternal punishment of Hell. This work is in the same church towards the great Altar at the right hand, where the priest sits when Mass is sung. (23) For the Nuns of San Piero Martire

* Or rather the "Quatuor Novissima."

(now transferred to the Monastery of S. Felice in Piazza, this Saint being likewise of the Order of Camaldoli) he painted on panel our Lady, St. John the Baptist, St. Dominic, St. Thomas, and St. Peter Martyr, with many small figures (24), and there is also a panel by his hand on the Screen of S. Maria Nuova (25).

The fame of Fra Giovanni having spread throughout the whole of Italy on account of these his many works, Pope Nicholas V. sent for him (26), and ordered him to paint in the Chapel of the Palace in Rome, where the Pope usually hears Mass, a Deposition from the Cross, and some beautiful subjects illustrating the Life of S. Lorenzo (27), as well as to illuminate some books, which are most beautiful. In the Minerva* he painted the principal Altar-piece, and an Annunciation, which is now against a wall near the great Chapel (28); and he ornamented with paintings, for the same Pontiff, the Chapel of the Sacrament in the Palace, which was subsequently destroyed by Paul III. in order to straighten the staircase. This great work of Fra Giovanni was a fresco in his best manner, and it represented some portion of the Life of Jesus Christ; he introduced in it several portraits from life of remarkable contemporary persons, which in all probability would all have been lost, if Jovius had not saved, and placed in his own Museum, those of Nicholas V., of the Emperor Frederick, (who at that time had come to Italy,) of the Monk Antonino, afterwards Archbishop of Florence (29), of Biondo of Forli, and of Ferrante of Aragon.

* This title is commonly given in Rome to the Church of S. Maria, built upon the site of an ancient temple of Minerva.

Seeing that Fra Giovanni was a most holy, peaceful, and humble minded man (as in very deed he was) the Pontiff thought this simple Monk worthy to fill the archiepiscopal chair of Florence, which happened at that time to be vacant; but upon its being offered to him, Fra Giovanni intreated his Holiness that this dignity might be bestowed upon some other person, in as much as he did not consider himself fit to hold rule over men; and he pointed out a Monk of his Order, who loved the poor, was most learned, and capable of governing, and upon whom that high office might be conferred much more fitly than upon himself. Hearing this, and being aware of its truth, the Pope most freely granted the request, and it was thus that the Dominican monk Antonino came to be Archbishop of Florence, a man famous for his sanctity and his learning, and, in a word, such as to deserve to be canonized by Adrian VI. now in our own times. Great was the goodness of Fra Giovanni (indeed most rare in these days) to yield so great a dignity and honour, offered to him by the Pontiff, to another man, whom with gladness and singleness of heart he thought more fit for them than himself. Let the Ecclesiastics of our times learn from this holy man not to seek greedily those honours which they cannot worthily sustain, but rather to yield them to the more deserving. But to return to Fra Giovanni; would to God that every Ecclesiastic (and the Faithful ought to take this in good part) spent his time, as did this truly angelic Monk, in the service of God, and to the good of his neighbour and of the world! What more can any one desire, what more ought any one to desire, than by holy living to gain the Heavenly Kingdom,

and by virtuous labours to leave in this world a lasting fame? In truth it cannot be, nor must we think it possible, that such high and extraordinary gifts as were in Fra Giovanni should descend from on high upon any but a man of the holiest life, for those, the working of whose art is in religious things, ought themselves to be devoted to the Church and holy men, seeing that when such things come from the hand of men of little faith and little reverence for Religion, they often suggest to the mind sinful desires and wanton thoughts; whence arise both blame and praise, blame for the impure intent, praise for the power and skillfulness of the working. But I should be sorry to lead any one to the wrong conclusion, that weakness and awkwardness are devotional, or that beauty and excellence must be sensual, as some think, who, when they see a representation of a woman or a youth more than commonly fair and gracious, call it at once wanton, not perceiving how unjustly they condemn the judgement of the Painter, who holds that the Saints in Heaven are as much more beautiful than mere mortal beings, as Heaven is more beautiful than our Earth and all our works; and what is worse, they discover their own gross and corrupt mind, when they draw out of these things evil desires. If they loved purity as much as they wish to show by their foolish zeal, these representations would turn their thoughts to Heaven, and foster the desire of making themselves acceptable to the Creator of all things, from whom, as from their fountain, all beauty and perfection do flow. How must we suppose such men to be moved, how must we believe that they demean themselves, when they are in the presence of living beauty, accompanied by lascivious blandishments, by

honeyed words, by graceful movements, by glances that ravish all but the stoutest hearts, if the image, the shadow, so to speak, of beauty, awakens in them such emotions? But on the other side, I would not let it be believed that I approve of those figures almost wholly unclothed, that are seen in churches; because in them it is evident that the artist has not properly considered what was due to the place; for even to make a show of the knowledge of his Art, the Painter should do it with all due consideration of circumstances, persons, times, and places.

Fra Giovanni was in his manner of life simple and most holy; and the following may be taken as an indication of his scrupulous subjection to duty. One day Nicholas V. having invited him to dinner, he refused to eat meat, because he had not previously obtained the required permission of his Superior, forgetting, in his unquestioning obedience, the authority of the Pope to release him from it. He avoided all worldly business, and living in purity and holiness, he so loved the poor, as, I believe, his soul now loves Heaven; he worked continually in his Art; nor would he ever paint other things than those which concerned the Saints. He might have been rich, but he cared not for riches; nay, he was wont to say, that true riches consist entirely in being content with little. He might have had command over many, and would not; saying, that to obey others was less troublesome and less liable to error. It was in his choice to have honours and dignities in his Convent and beyond it; but they were valueless to him, who affirmed that the only dignity he sought was to avoid Hell, and to reach Paradise: and what dignity is to be compared to that, which all Ecclesiastics, and indeed all men, ought to seek,

and which is found only in God and in a virtuous life? He was most kind, and living soberly and chastely, he freed himself from the snares of the world, frequently repeating that the Painter had need of quiet, and of a life undisturbed by cares, and that he who does the things of Christ should always be with Christ. That which appears to me a very wondrous and almost an incredible thing is, that among his brethren he never was seen in anger: and it was his wont, when he admonished his friends, to do so with a sweet and smiling gentleness. To those who asked for his works he invariably answered with incredible benignity, that they had only to obtain the consent of the Prior, and then he would not fail to do their pleasure. In fine, this Monk, whom it is impossible to praise over much, was in his works and words most humble and modest, and in his pictures of ready skill, and devout; and the Saints which he painted have a more faint-like air and semblance than those of any other Painter whatever. It was his rule not to retouch or alter any of his works, but to leave them just as they had shaped themselves at first; for he believed, and he used to say, that such was the will of God. It is supposed that Fra Giovanni never took up a brush without a previous prayer. He never painted a Crucifix without bathing his own cheeks with tears; and therefore it is that the expressions and attitudes of his figures clearly demonstrate the sincerity of his great soul for the Christian Religion. He died in 1455, in the sixty-eighth year of his age, (30) and left surviving him his scholars, Benozzo (31) Fiorentino, a close imitator of his style, and Zanobi Strozzi, (32) who painted many works both on canvases and on wood, that are dispersed

through the houses of the Florentines. One of his pictures, on panel, is now on the Screen of S. Maria Novella, by the side of the work of Fra Giovanni, and another in the now ruined Convent of S. Benedetto of the Order of Camaldoli, beyond the Porta a Pinti. It was, however, transferred to the Convent of the Angeli, in the small Church of S. Michele (situated before the principal Church), and placed against the wall at the right hand side, going towards the Altar. (33) A third, on panel, is in the Chapel of the Nati in S. Lucia; and a fourth in S. Romeo. (34) In the closet of the Ducal Palace there is also, by the same hand, the portrait of Giovanni de Medici son of Bicci, and that of Bartolommeo Valori, both in one picture. Gentile da Fabriano (35) and Domenico son of Michelino were two other scholars of Fra Giovanni; and Domenico painted, among many other things, the picture for the Altar of S. Zano in the Church of S. Apollinare at Florence.

Fra Giovanni was buried by his brethren in the Church of the Minerva at Rome, by the side entrance near the Sacristy, in a round tomb, (36) upon which was placed his portrait, of the natural size. This epitaph was carved on the marble: (37)

“ Non mihi fit laudi, quod eram velut alter Apelles;
Sed quod lucra tuis omnia, Christe, dabam:
Altera nam terris opera extant; altera cælo.
Urbs me Joannem flos tulit Etruriæ.”*

* Not that in me a new Apelles lived,
But that Thy poor, O Christ, my gains received,
This be my praise; Deeds done for fame on Earth
Live not in Heaven. Fair Florence gave me birth.

In S. Maria del Fiore there are two very large books, divinely illuminated, (38) by Fra Giovanni; they are very richly ornamented, held in great veneration, and seen only on the days of the great Festivals of the Church.





NOTES.†

(1).*

IN [the later editions of] Lanzi's "Storia Pittorica," and in the "Giornata d'istruzione a Fiesole" of Giuseppe del Rosso, the secular name of Fra Giovanni is stated to have been Santi Tosini. This, however, is a mistake, which has its origin in the Lettere Fiesolane, where, (in the fourth Letter), Fra Giovanni is confounded with another monk of the same Order and Convent. Baldinucci found in some ancient Florentine records an allusion to "Frate Guido vocato frate Giovanni." In the Chronicles of the Dominican Fathers he is mentioned as "Frater Johannes Petri de Mugello," and his brother, also a Dominican, is entitled "Frater Benedictus Petri de Mugello." Again, in an instrument cited by Della Valle [Storia del Duomo d'Orvieto, p. 368] mention is made of "Frater Johannes Petri." From these documents we learn the name of the painter's father, and consequently his own surname. The adjunct of Fiesole is derived not from his birthplace, but from his convent. [Fra Giovanni was born, according to Padre L. V. Marchese (Memorie dei più insigni pittori, scultori, e architetti Dominicani, Firenze, 1845) in the neighbourhood of Vicchio, a fortress situate between Dicomano and

† The Notes distinguished by a * are translated from those of the Florentine edition of Vasari, published in 1832-8; those marked with a † are from the German translation of Ludwig Schorn (Stuttg. und Tüb. 1837.) The Notes included within brackets are added by the present Translator.

Borgo a S. Lorenzo, near the Sieve, in the beautiful province of Mugello, and but a few miles from Vespignano, the birthplace of Giotto. The same writer represents the titles of "Beato" and "Angelico" as epithets by which the painter was popularly distinguished, in testimony both of the purity of his life, and the devotional spirit of his works. And this account seems in accordance with an allusion in Vasari's text (p. 10). Other authorities, however, consider these as designations proper to the spiritual rank which was solemnly conferred on Fra Giovanni by the Church.]

(2). † He entered holy Orders in 1409, when he was twenty years of age. Vasari, in his Life of Masaccio, says that the study of that artist's works was the source of Fra Giovanni's excellence in painting. Fra Giovanni, however, was born in 1387, Masaccio in 1402; Bottari therefore thinks it probable, that the former may have been a scholar of Gherardo Starnina, though he may subsequently have profited from seeing the works of Masaccio, whom he survived twelve years. In the paintings of Fra Giovanni no indication is seen of that study and pursuit of the Real which characterises Masaccio: animated, indeed, by a spirit at once pious and independent, it is hardly to be supposed that he would have fettered himself by the more material aims of his contemporary. Von Rumohr attributes to Fra Giovanni the great merit of having been the first to express the mental emotions and their most subtle modifications in the human countenance; "not that we mean," says Rumohr, "to point him out as a physiognomist, for in seizing "the varieties of the human countenance, Masaccio has unquestionably a power greater than Giovanni's, in whose hands there "is no doubt a certain uniformity of expression; but yet Giovanni "obtained a very decided influence on his times by the clearness "with which, within those limits, he impressed upon the countenance "the tenderest emotions of the soul."

(3). * Most of these miniatures were effaced by the constant use of the books, which were dispersed after the suppression of the convents by the French; some, however, are still preserved in S. Marco.

(4). * Very probably the same "Frater Benedictus Petri de Mugello" mentioned in note (1).

(5). [Of these three paintings on panel, one, according to Padre Marchese, is the same which is now in the Gallery of the Uffizii: the other two appear to be lost.]

(6). * Three beautiful little paintings, probably those here named, are now in the sacristy of Sa. Maria Novella.

(7). * This painting is still in very good preservation, except the red mantle of the Magdalene, which has been infelicitously retouched. [Although the description of it is introduced by Vasari whilst referring to the earlier works of Fra Giovanni, it appears from Marchese, p. 279, that it could not have been executed before 1441, when the painter was about fifty-four years of age.]

(8). * Frate Giovanni did not paint S. Antonino, who was then living, but some other person, whose portrait, as Baldinucci shews, was subsequently turned into a representation of that saint, by altering the old inscription, adding the glory and the diadem on the head, and giving him the archiepiscopal pallium.

(9). † The whole of this large painting is still well preserved, and full of beauty. [Marchese, however, says (p. 292) that during the French occupation of Florence some troops quartered in the convent erased the pupils from the eyes of all the figures.]

(10). * The Crucifixion and the lunettes are still in good preservation.

(11). * In the cells are still preserved some subjects from the New Testament, and from the life of S. Domenico; but the painting in the dormitory is no longer to be seen: there is however a Madonna, surrounded by Saints, not mentioned by Vasari.

(12). * This is now in the Accademia delle Belle Arti, ruined by cleanings and retouchings from inexperienced hands.

(13). * The predella is now on the principal altar of the Cappella dei Pittori, near the large cloister of the Ss. Nunziata. The lateral subjects are in tolerable preservation, but the central piece is spoiled by retouching.

(14). * The picture is yet in the Church, but the predella, so

much praised by Vasari, passed into the hands of strangers ; and a copy is now substituted for the original.

(15). † This picture of the Annunciation was sold about the middle of the last century to the Duke Maria Farnese.

(16). † This excellent picture has been, since 1812, in the Gallery of the Louvre. Outlines of it have been published by Ternite, with an introductory essay by A. W. Schlegel on the Coronation of the Virgin, and the Miracle of S. Dominic (Paris, 1817). A panel, representing the Death and Ascension of the Virgin, was in the possession of the late W. Y. Ottley, Esq.

(17). † They are upon eight panels, divided into thirty-six compartments, representing the life of Christ, and passed from the library of the monks of the order of *Serviti* to the gallery of the Florentine Academy. Outlines of them have been published by G. B. Nocchi and by Metzger.‡

(18). † Now in the gallery of the Academy of Florence. At the top of the picture, on three smaller panels, are the three Marys at the grave, the Resurrection, and Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene ; and at the sides, three saints. One head alone in this picture has suffered from unskilful restoration. It contains the portrait of Michelozzo Michelozzi, [mentioned by Vasari in his Life of that artist].

(19). * It is there still, though spoiled by dust and damp, over a walled up door in the small cloister containing the well.

(20). † This is a large tabernacle. In the centre the Madonna is sitting with the divine infant on her lap, and at the sides are twelve angels. The doors have two saints on the inner side, and two on the outer. This tabernacle is now in the Gallery of the Uffizii, at the entrance of the eastern corridor, and bears the date of 1433.

‡ Prefixed to the outlines of G. B. Nocchi is the profile portrait of the painter given, on a reduced scale, in the first page of the present translation. Fra Bartolommeo, a monk of the same religious house with Fra Giovanni, though not a contemporary, introduced his figure amongst the Beati in the fresco of the Last Judgment, painted, about 1499, in a chapel belonging to the Hospital of S. Maria Nuova at Florence. (See Vasari, Vita di Fra Bartolommeo.) From this fresco the head of Nocchi was traced.

(21). * † The painting over the door has suffered much, and the altar-piece has been removed to the choir. Formerly there were three other pictures of Beato Angelico in the sacristy of the Church of S. Domenico, viz. an Annunciation with large figures, and two panels with small, representing the life of the Virgin, and that of S. Domenico. These three pictures are now in the church of the Gesù.

(22). * After the suppression of this confraternity, in 1786, the picture passed into the Accademia delle Belle Arti. Besides the dead Christ, the Marys, &c. the painter has introduced into this composition S. Domenico and the Beata Villana, because the confraternity of the Tempio had some ancient claims to the relics of the latter saint, which were preserved in the Dominican Church of Sa. Maria Novella.

(23). † This most beautiful picture is also at present in the Accademia.

Another celebrated work of Fra Giovanni, representing the Last Judgment, was in the collection of Cardinal Fesch at Rome; [and is now in that of Lord Ward at London.] A third Last Judgment, of large size, in good preservation, and (according to Lanzi) one of the best works of Fra Angelico, is still in the Church of Sa. Maria de' Pazzi at Florence.

[Herr L. Schorn gives the following account of some other works of the Beato Angelico.] “ Three small panels, representing the
 “ history of five Martyrs, two others with theological disputants,
 “ the above mentioned Madonna with the four Saints, and an
 “ excellent dead Christ at the foot of the Cross, with various Saints,
 “ are in the Florentine Gallery. The Gallery of the Uffizii possesses
 “ five panels by the same hand, viz. the Preaching of a Saint, the
 “ Marriage of the Virgin, the Adoration of the Magi, the Death
 “ of St. Mary, and the Birth of John the Baptist. Three of these are
 “ engraved in the ‘ Galleria di Firenze.’ In the sacristy of the
 “ Dominicans at Perugia, is a Madonna. In the Corsini Gallery
 “ at Rome an Ascension of Christ, a Descent of the Holy Ghost,
 “ and a Last Judgment. In the collection of paintings in the

“ Vatican there are two small pictures from the life of S. Niccolò di Bari. In the Gallery of the Royal Museum at Berlin, a Virgin enthroned, a St. Francis, a St. Francis and St. Dominic greeting each other, and the Last Judgment, in which Cosimo Roselli is said to have helped him, (see Waagen’s *Verzeichniss*.) A mystical picture representing the Ascension of the believing Soul to Heaven, is now in the collection of Messrs. Weuddstadt at Frankfort.”

(24). * This picture is in the Grand-Ducal Gallery, hanging near the tabernacle mentioned in note (20).

(25). * This is also in the Gallery in the first room of the Tuscan School.

(26). [In the opinion of Padre Marchese (see pp. 320-331) Vasari has, in this and the succeeding paragraph, confounded Nicholas V. with his predecessor Eugenius IV. According to this critic, Bartolommeo Zabarella, Archbishop of Florence, died in 1445, and Eugenius, who then occupied the papal chair, bestowed that see on St. Antonino on the 1st of March, 1446. In support of these statements Marchese cites Padre Guglielmo Bartoli (*Vita di S. Antonino e de’ suoi Discepoli*, and *Vita di Fra Giovanni Angelico*), and also a letter of Francesco Castiglione, the friend of Antonino, preserved in the “*Acta Sanctorum*.” Consequently, if the see of Florence was ever offered to Fra Angelico, it must have been by Eugenius, and by him also the Painter must have been first invited to Rome, some time before March, 1446. Eugenius died in February, 1447, and on the fifth of March following, Tommaso da Sarzana was elected to the papal chair, with the title of Nicholas V. Within two months of this event, on the first of May, 1447, Fra Giovanni wrote from Rome to the Chapter of Orvieto, offering his services for the decoration of their Cathedral; which, in the opinion of Marchese, is inconsistent with the supposition that he was brought for the first time to Rome by Nicholas, for the purpose of painting in the Vatican. On the other hand, it is very surprising that Vasari, besides assigning these incidents to the wrong Pontiff, should at the same time mistake the portrait preserved in the

museum of Paulus Jovius. For since the fresco which contained this portrait contained also, as he tells us, that of "the Monk Antonino, afterwards Archbishop of Florence," it is clear that the Pope there introduced must be he whose pontificate commenced before the appointment of Antonino. However this question may be resolved, it is certain that Nicholas, a liberal patron both of learning and art, continued, if he did not initiate, the favour shewed to the painter. He is at least entitled to the credit of having commissioned the frescoes of the Chapel which bears his name; for on one of them is the following inscription placed in the ensuing century by Gregory XIII.—"Greg. XIII. Pont. Max. egregiam hanc picturam a F. Joanne Angelico Fesulano ord. Præd. Nicolai Papæ V. jussu elaboratam ac vetustate pœne consumptam instaurari mandavit." See Seroux d'Agincourt, *Hist. de l'Art*, Pl. cxlv. where an outline is given of all the paintings in the chapel.]

(27). [These, and the subjects from the Life of S. Stefano, are in the Chapel of Nicholas V. near the Stanze di Raffaëlle, and approached through the Sala di Costantino. They are for the most part in good preservation.]

Of this Chapel Herr L. Schorn says, "It was restored under Gregory XIII. and reopened, but it became so totally neglected after his time, that Taja learned its existence by reading the inscription of Gregory XIII., and Bottari could only get admittance to it through the window. In the middle of the last century mass was again performed in it; but the Chapel was again forgotten, and it was a German, Herr Wolfesz Hirt, who directed to it the attention of the lovers of art. The paintings of Fra Giovanni appear to have suffered much from restorations. They represent in two rows, one above the other, the life of the two deacons, St. Lawrence and St. Stephen, whose bones were preserved in S. Lorenzo fuori le mura. The higher row contains,

- " 1. The ordination of St. Stephen as Deacon.
- " 2. The Saint distributing alms.
- " 3. His preaching to the people.

- “ 4. His appearance before the Council at Jerufalem.
 “ 5 and 6. The leading forth and ftoning of the Saint.
 “ The lower row contains,
 “ 1. The ordination of St. Lawrence as Deacon.
 “ 2. The Pope giving to St. Lawrence the riches of the Church to be bestowed upon the poor.
 “ 3. The Saint diftributing thefe riches among the poor.
 “ 4. The Saint in bonds before the judgment feat of the Emperor.
 “ 5. His martyrdom.
 “ On the arches of the windows and of the doors are the four
 “ fathers of the Greek, and the four of the Latin, Church, and on
 “ the ceiling the four Evangelifts. A Defcent from the Crofs,
 “ which was over the altar, is concealed by whitewafh. The
 “ Evangelift St. John has been beautifully etched by Stolzel; the
 “ preaching of St. Stephen, and the diftribution of alms by St.
 “ Lawrence, have been etched by Ottley.” ‡

(28). * Thefe two panels are ftill in the Church of the Minerva, one over the altar of the Caraffa Chapel, dedicated to St. Thomas Aquinas, the other over the altar of the Chapel of the Roſario.

† In the tranſept of the Church there are now ſome paintings which are attributed to Fra Giovanni. Wood cuts from them are to be ſeen in a rare work entitled “ *Meditationes Reverendiſſimi patris Domini Johannis de Turrecremata.*”

(29). * He was ſubſequentially canonized: here he is repreſented by Fra Giovanni merely as a monk. [For the ſuppoſed portrait of him in S. Marco ſee note (8).]

(30). † In the firſt edition Vafari ſays in his ſixty-ninth year. Fra Giovanni died at Rome on the 18th of February, 1455. See Baldinucci, vol. 3, p. 99.

(31). † Benozzo Gozzoli’s life is written by Vafari.

(32). † This Zanobi di Benedetto was of the noble family of

‡ The copper-plate engraving now published by the Society is from the third ſubject in the lower ſeries.

Strozzi. Baldinucci gives a lengthened notice of him (vol. 3). He painted, not merely pictures for churches, but trays resembling our tea-boards, which it was the custom to present to women, as a gift after their confinement, and which were ornamented with sacred subjects.

(33). † This picture is no longer to be found. [The panel pictures mentioned by Vafari are now difficult to trace, having been dispersed at the suppression of the religious orders by the French.]

(34). † Richa ("Notizie delle Chiese Fiorentine," part i. p. 258) was not able to find this picture.

(35). † Lanzi doubts this, because, in 1417, Gentile was already employed on the Duomo of Orvieto as Magister Magistrorum, and Fra Giovanni at this time was only thirty years old; but according to Della Valle, (*Storia del Duomo d' Orvieto*), Gentile's residence in that city dates from 1423. His first master was Allegretto da Fabriano.

(36). * The tomb is not round, but oblong.

(37). [An inscription is added, above these lines, which is given in the Vignette following the Plates. The date (1455) is adduced by the Italian and German Editors, in proof of the inaccuracy of Della Valle, who, in the Catalogue of Artists employed at Orvieto, which is appended to the "*Storia del Duomo*," enters Fra Giovanni under the year 1457. In fact, however, this is simply a misprint for 1447, as may be seen by reference to the narrative portion of the same work.]

(38). * Some of the illuminated books of Sa. Maria del Fiore have been transferred to the Laurentian Library, but of these mentioned by Vafari we have no accurate information.

The following CATALOGUE of the Paintings now remaining from the hand of Fra Giovanni Angelico, is given by Padre Marchese in his "Memorie" already quoted. Its pretensions to completeness must be limited to the specimens left in Italy.

PERUGIA.

Church of S. Domenico. In the small Choir of the Monks, the Blessed Virgin on a throne with the Infant in her arms; at the sides two panels (now separated), one with S. John the Baptist, and St. Catherine the Virgin and Martyr, the other with S. Domenico and S. Niccolò di Bari. In the Sacristy, twelve small panels with twelve Saints; a picture on wood with two subjects from the life and death of S. Niccolò di Bari; two small panels with the Virgin receiving the Annunciation, and the angel Gabriel.

CORTONA.

Church of S. Domenico. On the façade of the Church, over the entrance door, in Fresco, the Blessed Virgin with the Infant in her arms, and at the sides two Dominican Saints. On the Canopy of the Porch, the four Evangelists. Within the Church, in the lateral Chapel near the High Altar, the Virgin enthroned, surrounded by Angels and Saints.

In the *Chiesa del Gesù*, an Annunciation and two predellas, one with the history of S. Domenico, and the other with that of the Virgin. [All these works were painted about 1414. See "Memorie," vol. i, p. 248.]

FIESOLE.

Convent of S. Domenico. In the Choir of the Church, a picture on wood, with the Blessed Virgin in a throne surrounded by Angels and Saints. In the Refectory, a fresco of the Crucifixion, with St.

Catalogue of Paintings by Fra Giovanni. 29

John and the Virgin beside the Cross. In the old Chapter House, also in fresco, the Blessed Virgin with the Infant in her arms, between S. Domenico and S. Thomas Aquinas, figures of the size of life.

Church of St. Jerome. The Blessed Virgin with the "*Seraphic Doctor*" and other Saints.

FLORENCE.

Convent of St. Mark. In fresco—the Crucifixion in the first cloister, and five lunettes, with half-length figures. In the Chapter House, the Crucifixion, and the portraits of illustrious Dominicans. In the Convent, all the cells but two of the upper Dormitory, amounting to thirty-two, and three subjects on the external walls. Some Crucifixes in the Dormitory called "*Il Giovanato*."

S. Maria Novella. Three Reliquaries.

The Academy. The Deposition from the Cross. Two small panels representing the Beato Albertus Magnus, and S. Thomas Aquinas discoursing from the Pulpit. The Blessed Virgin with the Infant in her arms. S. Cosimo healing a sick man. Another Deposition from the Cross. The Final Judgment. The entombment of the five Martyrs, Sts. Cosimo and Damiano, and their three brothers. A Pietà, with the instruments of the Passion. Eight panels, which formed the doors of the Ambry in the Church of the Annunziata, with thirty-five subjects from the life of Christ. The Blessed Virgin in the midst of several Saints. Another similar panel. The Blessed Virgin, with two Angels and some Saints.

Gallery of the Uffizii. A large tabernacle with the Blessed Virgin on a throne, and several Saints. The Coronation of the Virgin. Six small panels representing the Adoration of the Magi, two subjects from the life of S. Mark, the Marriage and the Death of the Blessed Virgin, and the Birth of S. John the Baptist.

Gallery of the Pitti Palace. A picture on wood, formerly in the Church of S. Peter the Martyr, and afterwards in the Gallery of the Uffizii; it represents the Blessed Virgin, and several Saints.

30 *Catalogue of Paintings by Fra Giovanni.*

ROME.

Vatican. Chapel of Nicholas V. painted in fresco with subjects from the lives of the Martyrs St. Stephen and St. Lawrence. Gallery. Two small panels with subjects relating to S. Niccolò di Bari.

Valentini Gallery. Part of a predella, probably belonging to the picture in the Choir of the Church of S. Domenico at Fiesole.

Corfini Gallery. Last Judgment.

Gallery of Cardinal Fesch. A Final Judgment. [Now in Lord Ward's Collection in London].

ORVIETO.

Cathedral. A large fresco on the roof of the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin, representing the upper portion of a Last Judgment, left unfinished by Fra Angelico, and completed by Luca Signorelli.

MONTEFALCO.

The Church of the Franciscan Monks, according to Rosini, has some works of Fra Giovanni; the subjects, however, he does not mention.

PARIS.

Louvre. A large picture on wood, representing the Coronation of the Virgin, and a predella, with subjects from the life of S. Domenico.

BERLIN.

Royal Museum. S. Domenico and S. Francisco embracing each other, and a Final Judgment.

LIST OF PLATES.

VIGNETTE at the beginning of the Life. Portrait of Fra Giovanni.

From the fresco-painting by Fra Bartolommeo. (See p. 22, Note.)

Plate

1. Crucifixion and various Saints.
On the wall of the Chapter House of S. Marco at Florence.
2. Coronation of the Virgin.
From one of the cells in S. Marco.
3. Altarpiece, Madonna with infant Saviour and Saints.
Now in the Accademia at Florence.
4. Coronation of the Virgin.
Now in the Louvre.
5. The Flight into Egypt.
6. The Murder of the Innocents.
7. The Raising of Lazarus.
8. Christ's Entry into Jerusalem.
9. Judas receiving the Thirty Pieces of Silver.
10. Christ washing the Disciples' Feet.
11. The Burial in the Garden.
12. The Deposition from the Cross.
Now in the Accademia at Florence.
13. Tabernacle.
Now in the Gallery of the Uffizii at Florence.
14. Figure of Christ.
In the Duomo at Orvieto.
15. Group of Prophets.
In the Duomo at Orvieto.
16. The Last Judgment.
Now in the Accademia at Florence.
17. The Marriage of the Virgin.
Now in the Gallery of the Uffizii.

} Panel-pictures, now in the
Accademia at Florence.

18. The Annunciation.
On a Reliquary in the Sacristy of Sta. Maria Novella.
19. St. Peter preaching.
Now in the Gallery of the Uffizii.
20. The Adoration of the Magi.
Now in the Gallery of the Uffizii.
- Vignette. Tombstone of Fra Giovanni, in Sta. Maria sopra Minerva,
at Rome.



HIC JACET VENETUS PICTOR FR IDEL FLOR ORDIS PŒCATOR 144
 NON MIHI SIT LAVDI QVOD ERAM VELVT ALTER APPELLES M
 SED QVOD LVCRATAVIS OMNIA CHRISTIE DABAM .CCCC
 ALTERA NAM TERRIS OPERA EXTANT ALTERA CAELO L
 VRBS ME JOANNEM FLOSTVLIT ETRVRIAE L



*Coronation of the Virgin Mary
by the Christ Child*







Madonna & Child with the Holy Family and the Seven Saints





ELONGAVI FUGIENT & MANSI INSOLITVDINE PS. XXXV. C.



SVRGE ACCIPE PVERVM & MATREM EP & FUGE IN EGITVM MAT. II.

Inglese da Bore

F. G. G. G. G.

1777 1778 1779

The Flight into Egypt

Joseph the carpenter of Nazareth, and Mary his wife, fled into Egypt with the young Jesus, to escape from the wrath of Herod the king of the Jews, who sought to destroy him.

NUVE EGERVT INFILIOS IVOA ET VDERVT SANGVINE INOCENTE INTERRA SVS. 66. III. C



IRATVS ERODES OCCIDIT OMNES PVEROS QVIERAT IN BETHLEHEM MACC. II. C

Anglus ad. 1550

H. J. 1550

G. Hart. 1550

One of the first of the new down printed in the 1550s and
now in the Bodleian. The title is "The Massacre of the Innocents".

anti

1875

2. *Thymus* *leucocarpus* *W.*



The whole entry into Jerusalem
 The whole entry into Jerusalem
 The whole entry into Jerusalem



Argentei la. recule.

E. Trimeu imp.

J. Schopf litho. cur.

*Exemplum vero in quo Christus tentatus est a Satana
 Cumque tentatus fuisset a Satana, reversus est in Iherusalem
 et habitavit in templo, et dicebat illis: Ecce ego mitto vos
 in praedicationem, et vos estis testes in Iherusalem, et in Iudaea, et in Samaria, et in gentibus.*



Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a Latin inscription or a note related to the drawing above. The text is written in a fluid, elegant hand, characteristic of the late 15th or early 16th century.

Date .

XPI GEME DEPRECABVTVR I CRIT SERVITVM E GLORIA



JOSEPH DEPOSITVS CORPV JHV VOLVIT INSINDONE ECCE MINVET

Angelo da Frascati 5 1744 1745

The Descent into the Tomb

This of the picture of the Descent into the Tomb is now in the Ashmolean Library at Oxford.



Angéles au Presole.

15. 5. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.





Archievo da Foz de

Tabernacle painted in 1433, for the Flax



Merchants guild; now in the Uffizi at Florence.
 Page 11.

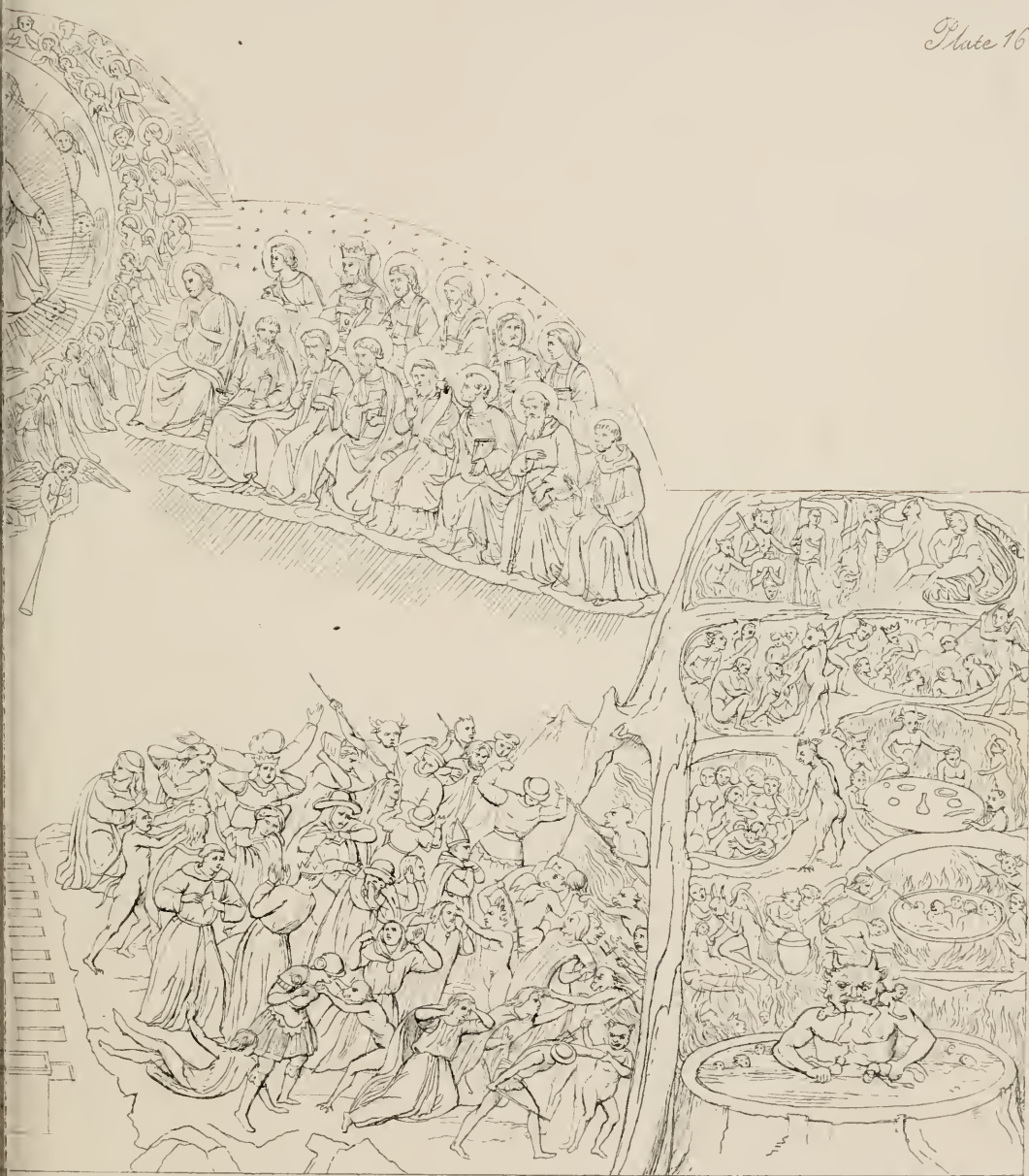


Figure of our Saviour as Judge, seated on the Clouds of Heaven



Group of Forty Martyrs in the Shrine of Orvieto
Page 4





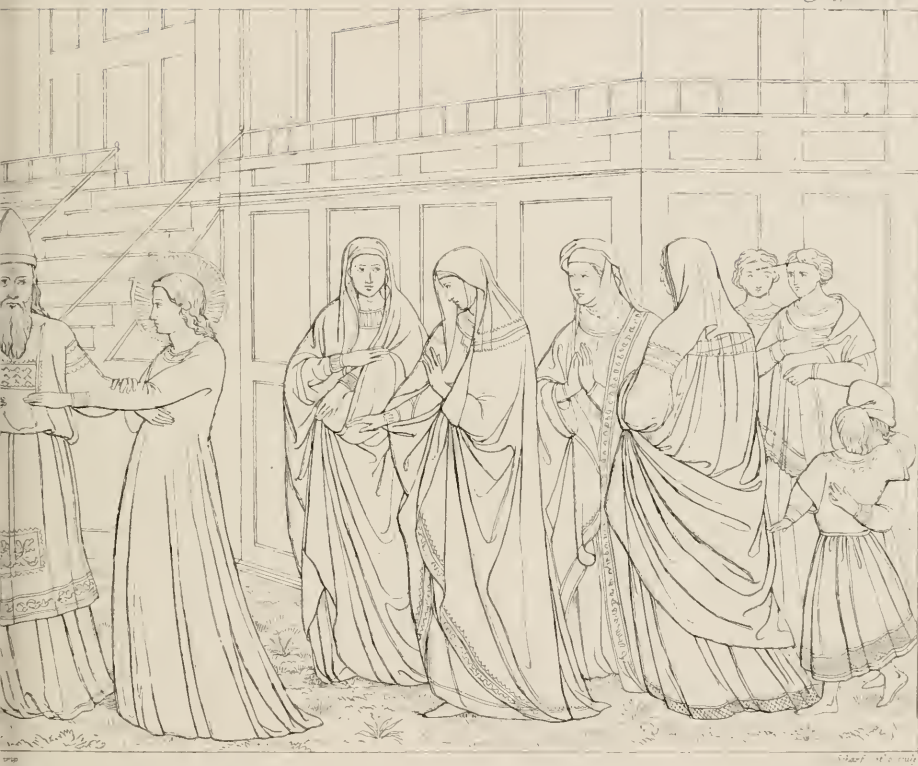




Anunciação do Feticão

circumcision of the boy Jesus

Fig. 100



The Virgin and the Holy Spirit



6. 23. 1871. 1871. 1871.

2. 1871. 1871. 1871.

1871. 1871. 1871.



*I have just taken a sketch of the building
The drawing is in the margin*



1871. 1202

- Jesus the carpenter

1871. 1202; a picture on the gallery of the Pitt-Rivers Museum



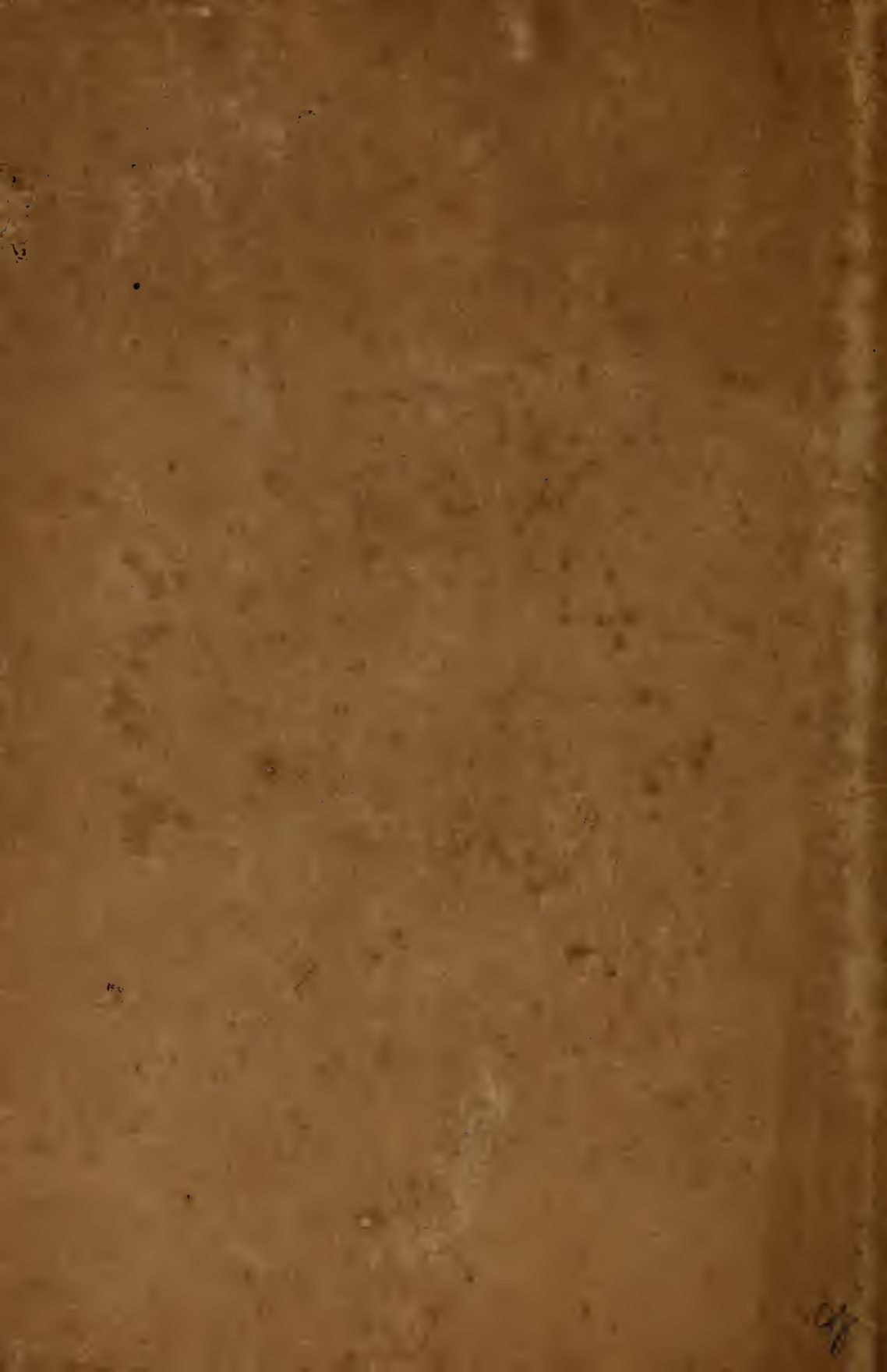
Coronation of the King

Coronation of the King, a picture from

The Picture Book



The Circumcision of Christ
by the Prince of the Apostles



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